

REMARKS

1. Reconsideration and further prosecution of the above-identified application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and discussion that follows. Claims 1-16 are pending in this application. Claims 1-16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Pat. No. 6,511,231 to Lampert et al. in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,213,650 to Moriyama et al. After a careful review of the specification and claims, it has been concluded that the restrictions are in error and the restrictions are, therefore, traversed.

2. Claims 1-16 are pending in this application. Claims 1-16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious Lampert et al. in view of Moriyama et al. In response, independent claims 1 and 9 have been further limited to an optical source and receiver disposed in a first side wall "so that an optical signal from the optical source is reflected back to the receiver from a second, opposing sidewall".

In contrast to, and as admitted by the Examiner, "Lampert et al. . . . does not teach an optical source and a receiver disposed on the same sidewall. Instead, the optical source and the receiver and disposed on opposite sides" (Office Action of 1/20/04, page 2). Since the source and receiver are on opposite sides, Lampert et al. also fails to teach or suggest an optical source and receiver arranged "so that an optical signal from the optical source is reflected back to the receiver from a second, opposing sidewall".

Similarly Moriyama et al. also fails to teach or suggest a source and receiver on the same sidewall and

arranged "so that an optical signal from the optical source is reflected back to the receiver from a second, opposing sidewall". At best, Moriyama et al. shows a transmitter 6 attached to an inner bottom face 4b of a housing 2 and that transmits a signal that is reflected from a reflector 14 to an optical fiber 24 that is not on the same sidewall and, in fact, is on a different sidewall. Similarly, Moriyama et al. shows an optical fiber 24 that transmits a signal that is reflected from a reflector 14 to a receiver 6 that, again, is not on the same sidewall and, in fact, is on a different sidewall.

Since Lampert et al. and Moriyama et al. fail to teach or suggest a source and receiver disposed on the same sidewall and arranged "so that an optical signal from the optical source is reflected back to the receiver from a second, opposing sidewall", the combination fails to teach or suggest each and every claim element. Since the combination fails to teach or suggest each and every claim element, the rejection is believed to be improper and should be withdrawn.

3. Allowance of claims 1-16, as now presented, is believed to be in order and such action is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of the subject application, he is respectfully requested to telephone applicant's undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,
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